

# MARION COUNTY

## Honorable James C. Cashion

Marion County Courthouse  
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## Council Priorities

### **1. All children in Marion County will be free from drug and/or alcohol abuse.**

*Develop local treatment and prevention programs; concentrate on enforcement issues; educate parents on what to look for in their children's lives that may indicate drug usage; additional juvenile probation officer.*

### **2. All children in Marion County will have affordable transportation to available services.**

*Transportation to all services; mental health, medical appointments, after school services, employment; public transportation available to disadvantage families and at-risk children.*

### **3. All children in Marion County have access to social workers/therapists in the school system.**

*To provide someone to motivate the child and to teach parents the value of education and to encourage parents to become involved in the child's school to consult with teachers and ensure homework success; to help strengthen the bond between schools and families; and provide prevention resources.*

# Issues

Issues are the primary concerns or problems facing children in the county

## Early Care Education

Children (0 – 5) are provided opportunities to fully develop emotionally, socially, physically, and cognitively and are ready to succeed.

### Lack of early childhood education programs

#### Action Steps

- 1) Investigate funding resources to expand/add programs.
- 2) Make pre-kindergarten available.

### Quality childcare

#### Action Steps

- 1) Provide financial support to families in need of child care.
- 2) Secure funding to expand existing.
- 3) Subsidized programs.
- 4) Training curriculum for daycare providers.
- 5) Raise foster care payments.

## Economic Security

Children grow up in a financially stable home where the child's basic needs can be met.

### Increase availability of job training/placement

#### Action Steps

- 1) Provide information & resources of job availability.
- 2) Collaborate w/ job training & education sites to implement programs.
- 3) Build on existing service providers, i.e. Alabama Career Center System for career preparation, skill training & labor market information.

### Affordable transportation county-wide

#### Action Steps

- 1) Secure funding for public transportation.
- 2) Collaborate & coordinate with existing agencies with an operating transportation system.

### Increase the availability of childcare

#### Action Steps

- 1) Increase childcare resources on the job site.
- 2) Pursue funding to assist in meeting standards of opening daycare centers.
- 3) Collaborate with childcare management agencies in developing resources.

## Education

Children learn the skills necessary to become productive citizens.

### Too many students dropping out of school & not graduating from high school

#### Action Steps

1) Expand program such as: technical education, school/work co-op program, non-traditional classroom alternative programs.

### Prepare students to enter to work field

#### Action Steps

1) Secure funding for student workshops/activities.  
2) Design workshops/activities that prepare potential employees to seek, train for and maintain productive employment.

### Social workers for schools

#### Action Steps

1) School social workers to counsel w/ parents & students concerning truancy problems.  
2) To aid & counsel with parents & students concerning potential dropout, as well as assisting dropouts with obtaining alternative educational sources.

## Health

Children's (0 - 19) physical and mental well-being in the county.

### Teen smoking

#### Action Steps

1) Provide information & education on health issues of smoking.  
2) Offer smoking cessation programs/health shops.  
3) Offer support System.

### Low birth weight

#### Action Steps

1) Sponsor pregnancy prevention programs for grades 6 to 12.  
2) Investigate how many maternities receive prenatal care & education.  
3) Referral to community resources: Family Planning Services, WIC, SOBRA, All Kids.

### Teen sexual activity

#### Action Steps

1) Educate teens & their parents about the consequences & responsibilities of early involvement.  
2) Encourage teens & parents through public awareness to utilize programs offered by local agencies.  
3) Provide social support to teens to include self esteem, stress & infant responsibilities.

## **Parent Involvement Skills**

Parents and guardians participation and effectiveness in fostering an environment for children to become mature, responsible and independent adults.

### **Lack of parental involvement in child's life**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Referral to the Parent Project.
- 2) Promote & encourage parental involvement through school & church oriented programs.
- 3) Stipulate to families drawing certain state benefits that parental involvement is necessary & mandated with verification being required.

### **Recognizing & dealing with substance abuse in children**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Teaching parents to recognize signs of drug abuse.
- 2) Teaching parents how to deal w/ children abusing drugs & prevention.
- 3) Provide community programs for children abusing drugs, along w/ adolescent support groups.

### **Children in Marion County will be safe from abuse & violence**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Court-ordered referrals to the Parent Project for at-risk juveniles & their families.
- 2) Promote community-based parenting programs through the school systems.
- 3) Expand programs to educate children about abuse and safety.

## **Safety**

Children live free of abuse, neglect, crime, and drugs.

### **Drug and alcohol abuse**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Start/sponsor prevention programs for K-12.
- 2) Develop local treatment programs.
- 3) Concentrate of Enforcement issues.

### **Juvenile arrest rate - substance abuse & delinquent**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) Additional JPO.
- 2) Provide training to local law enforcement agencies.
- 3) Mandate participation in local program that provide education & prevention.
- 4) JPO will communicate w/ school officials, parents, law enforcement to refer all instances of substance abuse & crime to the Juvenile Court.

### **Juvenile sex offenders**

#### **Action Steps**

- 1) To develop & implement intervention & treatment for juvenile sex offenders.
- 2) Encourage local mental health centers to provide services specific to sex offenders.

# Policy Recommendations

- More funding for rural counties.
- Funding for public transportation.
- More money provided on the state level for quality low income childcare.
- Additional juvenile probation officers and/or staff for Marion County.
- Funding for programs to teach parents how to be involved with their children's lives.
- School Resource Officers or School Social Workers.
- Family Advocacy Center.